

November 5, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-066

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region IV staff on this date.

Facility

All Tech Corporation
Pocatello, Idaho
Docket: 030-35321
License: 11-27657-01

Licensee Emergency Classification

☐ Notification of Unusual Event
☐ Alert
☐ Site Area Emergency
☐ General Emergency
☒ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: MISSING PORTABLE GAUGES RECOVERED

DESCRIPTION:

On October 15, 2002, the licensee notified the NRC Operations Center that two Troxler portable moisture density gauges were missing from their storage area. The gauges were both Model Number 1401s, with Serial Numbers 2813 and 2744. Each gauge contained a nominal 303.4 megabequerels (8.2 millicuries) of cesium-137 and a nominal 1850.0 megabequerel (50 millicurie) of americium-241/beryllium.

The licensee had performed an inventory of its gauges in August 2002. The licensee stated that since the Model 1401s were not being used much in the field, the cases were locked and chained together at the time of the inventory. Because they were locked and chained, the licensee did not physically inventory the gauges, but rather accounted for the cases, since they assumed the gauges were still inside. Around October 15, 2002, the licensee heard local media reports that two portable moisture density gauges had been found on October 13, 2002, by two hunters in the Blaze Creek Area of the Portneuf River near Lava Hot Springs, Idaho.

Upon hearing this, the licensee performed a physical inventory of their gauges and discovered that two Model 1401 cases had been unlocked and the gauges were missing. The licensee subsequently notified the NRC Operations Center of the theft. The gauges had been taken into custody by the Bannock County Sheriff's Department, with the assistance of the Idaho State Police. While the matter was being investigated, the gauges were stored at the Idaho Department of Transportation offices in Pocatello, Idaho. The licensee confirmed via the serial numbers that both of the found gauges were the ones they had reported missing.

On November 4, 2002, the licensee notified the NRC Operations Center that both Troxler portable moisture density gauges had been returned to them. More specifically, when the police no longer needed the gauges for their investigation, the gauges were turned over to the licensee. The licensee took possession of the gauges on October 31, 2002.

Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS and the Region's PAO and SLO.

This information has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 10:00 a.m. (CST) on November 5, 2002.

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